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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes the situation of children in Romania. The booklet is divided into five parts: (1) child and family protection, objective of the post revolutionary Romanian society; (2) forms of organizing the process of education and training for the children with a normal physical and intellectual development; (3) the situation of the disadvantaged children; (4) aspects of the organization of children's leisure time and on the cultivation of their skills; and (5) children's health. The first section discusses the sociodemographic background of Romania, including the revolution of December 1989 and its consequences and statistical data on the population. This section also describes amendments to the legal framework on child protection and concrete aspects of the protection of children including some categories of disadvantaged children. Also listed are governmental and nongovernmental structures implied in child protection. The second part addresses organizing and functioning principles and concrete aspects of the educational system in Romania. The third part focuses on disadvantaged children including forms of protection for socially disadvantaged children, deficient children, and children with deviating behavior, such as the institutionalization of delinquent children, and the prevention and rehabilitation of street children. The fourth section is divided into leisure time activities, literature, film, radio and television programs for children, and children's organizations. The last section discusses the main development directions of the medical system in Romania consisting of equipping the medical units with adequate equipment, training for medical staff that is specialized for children, and family planning. The document concludes that progress has been realized in the education, health, and social protection of children. (DK)

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WHITE BOOK
OF
THE ROMANIAN CHILD

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ROMANIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR

UNICEF

INSTITUTE of EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

W H I T E B O O K

of

THE ROMANIAN CHILD

June 1993

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C O N T E N T S

CHILD AND FAMILY PROTECTION - OBJECTIVE OF THE POST - REVOLUTIONARY ROMANIAN SOCIETY

- **Sociodemographic Background**
  The Revolution of December 1989 and its Consequences
  Statistical Data Regarding the Population of Romania
- **Amendments to the Legal Framework on Child Protection**
- **Concrete Aspects on the Protection of Children**
  The Social Protection of Children and Families under Normal Circumstances
  Social Protection for Some Categories of Disadvantaged Children
- **Governmental and Non - Governmental Structures Implied in Child Protection**

FORMS OF ORGANIZING THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE CHILDREN WITH A NORMAL PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Organizing and Functioning Principles**
- **Concrete Aspects Regarding the Educational System in Romania**

THE SITUATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

- **Socially Disadvantaged Children: Forms of Protection**
  General Aspects
  Forms of Family Protection for the Orphans and for the Abandoned
  Institutionalized Forms of Protecting the Children
- **Deficient Children; Forms of Protection**
- **Children with Deviating Behavior**
  Delinquent Children Institutionalization
    - Concrete Aspects
    - Preventive and Rehabilitation Programs

  Street Children
    - General Aspects
    - Programs of Prevention and Rehabilitation

ASPECTS ON THE ORGANIZATION OF CHILDREN'S LEISURE TIME AND ON THE CULTIVATION OF THEIR SKILLS

- **Leisure Time Activities**
- **Literature, Film, Radio-TV Programs for Children**
- **Children's Organizations**

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

CHILD AND FAMILY PROTECTION - OBJECTIVE OF THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY ROMANIAN SOCIETY

Sociodemographic Background

The Revolution of December 1989 and its Consequences

The fall of the dictatorial regime, on the 22nd of December 1989, meant also the beginning of a large and deep process of democratization of the Romanian society, of promoting the fundamental human, family and child rights and liberties.

The period of passing from a totalitarian state to the constitutional one, deeply involved in the transition to market economy, is continuously marked by the improvement of the respect of the human, child and family rights in agreement with the international standards in the fields.

The Constitution, adopted through a popular referendum at the end of 1991, the decrees issued up to the elections of 1990, as well as all the laws adopted after this event, lay down fundamental rights and liberties for the citizens of Romania, in full agreement with the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Child.

After tens of years of frustrations, the citizens of Romania were given back the liberty of expression, the religious liberty, the liberty of association, the free circulation, the access to information and political rights, the child's rights to education, health and normal and decent development, a.s.o., to mention only the most important ones.

Though the revolution has determined a series of changes in the field of rights and liberties, just like in all the other former

communist countries, the totalitarian period has left deep traces in the social and economic life of Romania, with serious consequences upon human development, in general and upon child's development, in particular. The economic decline, the effort of rapid payment of the external debt have led to the dramatic diminishing of the population's living standards.

Thus, the transition period has started against the background of a difficult heritage of the past. The difficult situation has been amplified by the ever rapid declining economy, by the decrease the population's income, by the appearance of unemployment, on short - by the increase of poverty's dimensions. We can also mention the aggravation of the social problems, generated by the economic impossibility of granting the corresponding social protection for all the social categories. Several families have a living standard under the poverty level, a large number of parents being jobless. For the social services (health, education, culture) the budgetary funds are insufficient. In 1991, as compared to 1989, once with the decrease of the material production, the expenditures for children allocations and other forms of support have been reduced as rate of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Statistical Data Regarding the Population of Romania

In order to better understand the concrete aspects of the evolution of children's situation in Romania after 1989, it is necessary to know the general data on the demographic nature of the country.

The actual population is of 22.8 million inhabitants, out of which 89.3% persons are Romanian, the rest belonging to the national minorities, according to the census of 1992 (Table 1). Out of this some 30% are children between 0-18 years of age (Table 2).

Table 1. Statistical Data of the 1992 Census

		Number	Structure (%)
Total population out of which:		22,760,449	100.00
1	Romanians	20,324,829	89.30
2	Magyars	1,619,368	7.10
3	Gipsy	409,723	1.80
4	Germans	111,301	0.50
5	Ukrainians	66,483	0.30
6	Lippovans	29,774	under 0.10
7	Turks	29,533	under 0.10
8	Serbians	29,080	under 0.10
9	Tartars	24,649	under 0.10
10	Macedonian Romanians	21,089	under 0.10
11	Slovaks	20,672	under 0.10
12	Bulgarians	9,935	under 0.05
13	Jews	9,107	under 0.05
14	Russians	8,914	under 0.05
15	Macedonians	6,999	under 0.05
16	Swabians	6,292	under 0.05
17	Czechs	5,800	under 0.05
18	Croatians	4,180	under 0.05
19	Poles	4,247	under 0.05
20	Greeks	3,897	under 0.05
21	Caroşeveans	2,775	under 0.05
22	Csángós	2,165	under 0.05
23	Armenians	2,023	under 0.05
24	Transylvanian Saxons	1,843	under 0.05
25	Szecklers	831	under 0.05
26	Ruthenians	350	under 0.05
27	Others national minorities	3,480	under 0.05
28	Non-declared ethnic origin	1,047	under 0.05

(National Commission on Statistics (NCS): Population Census - January, 1992)

Table 2. Romania's population up to 18 years of age

Groups of age	Number
0 - 18	6,843,939
0 - 3	1,348,376
4 - 6	1,063,139
7 - 14	2,917,318
15 - 18	1,515,105

(NCS: Statistical Term Bulletin - 4th term 1992)

The negative and long-lasting effects of the past are reflected

in the field, as well, being generated either by the forced demographic policy, and by the ignorance of the serious long-term consequences of this policy:

- the deterioration of mother's and children's health;
- the increase of maternal and infant mortality rate;
- the increase of the number of institutionalized children and of the disabled non-institutionalized ones.

In the two decades of forced birth policy Romania has undergone one of the highest levels in mother and child mortality, once with the registration of a large number of unwished children, some of which affected by serious deficiencies, due to mother's use of empiric and inefficient birth-control methods.

The infant mortality level of 26.9 % (1989) was some 50 % higher than the average level of CEE countries, while maternal mortality of the same year was some 10 times higher than the corresponding average level in these countries. The main cause of maternal mortality is the use of illegal abortions, generating a mortality index of 1.47, the total index being of 1.69 in 1989 (see Table 3). The abrogation of the legislation on abortion prohibition appeared in 1989 as a reparatory measure of strict necessity. As a consequence of this step and of some demographic mutations the number of marriage has decreased and the number of divorces has increased since 1990, the following years having registered a decrease of the birth index, parallel with an important increase of abortions. In 1990 the maternal mortality index has decreased at less than half, as compared to 1989, and to one third in 1991, abortion continuing however to be the main cause.

Table 3. The Evolution of the Demographic indexes

Indicators	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Birth index*)	16.5	16.0	13.6	11.9	11.4
Infant mortality index*)	25.4	26.9	26.9	22.7	23.3
Maternal mortality index**)	1.50	1.69	0.84	0.58	
out of which					
- due to abortions	1.47	0.58	0.26		
- due to obstretical risks	0.22	0.26	0.32		

*) - NCS - Operational Statistical Information - April 1993

**) - World Bank Report on Health in Romania; at every 100,000 live births

Amendments to the Legal Framework on Child Protection

At the time of the ratification of the "Convention on the Rights of the Child", adopted by the U. N. General Assembly, in November 1989, Romania had already at disposal a legal system of promoting children's rights, thus being able to make profit of the favorable premisses of promoting and implementing the provisions of this most important document. Among others, the respective legislation consisted of provisions such as defending the rights and the interests of the children up to their coming to age, supporting financially the families with allowances for children, paid maternity leave (112 days), birth allotments for the mothers since the 3rd birth-on, material supports for the mothers with many children, allotments for fostered children, scholarships for pupils and students, allotments for board, etc. We can also mention regulations on issues such as: obligatory basic education (10 forms) as well as free education of any type; the prohibition of employing children in any kind of job/trade before their 16 years of age; norms on labour protection for young people starting with 16 years of age, they benefiting by a larger protection up to the age of 18 (prohibition of night labour and labour under dangerous conditions, supplementary vacations a.s.o.)

In spite of such legal provisions, during the totalitarian period, important deficiencies were manifest in the field of child care education and development, and especially for the orphan, handicapped or abandoned children (precarious service qualities, insufficient financial and material resources, a small number of institutions and staff for child protection, etc.).

At the same time, once with the forced birth policy, a system of mystifying, marginalizing and eluding the serious consequences appeared among various categories of infants and within their families.

The communist regime concentrated all those disabled children, in huge institutions, usually outside communities, having miserable conditions, of quasi-ignorance of the elementary hygiene or education. All this, suddenly and shockly revealed after the revolution, even for Romania's population, needed and still needs amelioration steps, among which even the revision and the creation of a new legislative background.

On this line, the very new Constitution of Romania adopted after the revolution, consists of a series of new provisions on children's and young people protection, in full agreement with U. N. "Convention on the Rights of the Child", ratified by the Romanian Parliament and whose implementation was decided once with the document signed in New York on the 30th of September 1990 by the President of Romania, together with other heads of state.

Article 45 of the "Constitution of Romania", totally dedicated the "Protection of children and the young" stipulates:

(1) Children and young shall enjoy special protection and assistance in the pursuit of their rights.

(2) The State shall grant state allowances for children and benefits for the care of sick or disabled children. Other forms of social protection for children and young shall be established by law.

(3) the exploitation of minors, their employment in activities that might be harmful to their health, or morals, or endanger their life and normal development are prohibited.

(4) minors under the age of fifteen may not be employed for any paid labour.

(5) The public authorities are bound to contribute to secure the conditions towards the free participation of young people in the political, social, economic, cultural and sporting life of the country.

At the same time article 46 of the "Constitution of Romania"

dedicated to the "Protection of the disabled persons" aims mainly the children. According to this article:
"The State shall ensure the promotion of a national policy of preventive care, treatment, readjustment, education, instruction and social integration of the disabled, while observing the rights and duties of their parents or legal tutors".

Other constitutional provisions have in view the family, laying down:

- the principle of parent's equal rights and obligations in their children's development and education.
- the principle that children born out wedlock are equal before the law with those born in wedlock. (article 44).

In the same spirit, besides a large series of laws, decrees and decisions on the defence of children's interests, some provisions comprised in the Family Code, as well as Law no. 3/1970, on the protection of certain categories of children (decree no. 138/1990) have been improved.

Concrete Aspects on the Protection of Children

The Social Protection of Children and Families under Normal Circumstances

- **Allocations**

- The State allocation for children has been granted to children up to 16 years of age, depending on the number of children supported by a family and according to parents' wages. This was granted also to the children of foreigners and of persons without Romanian citizenship, but legal residents in Romania. In the latest three years of transition, the allocation has been increased in a slower rhythm as compared to the salary index. In May 1993 the law on allocations for children was modified by that the allocation is equally granted to all the

children in the same quantum, on condition they are enrolled in a type of education; the value of the allocations has increased twice so far.

- Maternity leave pay granted to mothers for 112 days.
- Part-time (up to 6 hours/day) job for a period of three months before the maternity leave.
- Holiday pay granted to mothers at their request, for upbringing their children up to one year of age.
- Medical leave pay granted to mothers in case of the child's falling ill up to the latter's three years of age.
- Social and merit scholarships, compensations for school supplies and differences for the communication and season tickets granted to all the children enrolled in any type of education; unlike in the former period; the University students are granted scholarships irrespective of their parents' income.
- Protection granted to high-school, vocational, or apprentice-school leavers, starting with their 16 years of age, and their being conceded a larger number of legal leave days, and doles in case of being discharged or even in the case of not having ever been taken on the staff after school leaving (up to the age of 18).

- **Social Services**
- Free State education for all the schooling period.
- Free schoolbooks
- Free medical assistance and drugs up to 16 years of age.
- The partial State's budget support for pre-primary children in crèches and nursery-schools.

Social Protection for Some Categories of Disadvantaged Children

If up to the revolution, children with a normal physical and intellectual evolution benefitted by the protection granted by law, for certain disadvantaged categories (orphans, abandoned or

disabled), and especially for the institutionalized ones, social protection existed only in written documents. Proof are the images of the Homes for Children which in December 1989 shocked the whole world. The improvement of their situation was among the emergency actions of 1990. At the same time, the system of protection for the disadvantaged children has been supplemented with some others, granting a real social protection. Social protection addresses to either children in the family or to the institutionalized ones.

- **Allocations**

- State allocations for disabled children up to 18 years of age increased 100%, as compared to those of the normally physically and intellectually developed ones.
- Allocations for children fostered or entrusted to a family or to a person, representing more than the double of the allocations for common children.
- Prolongation of the duration of the allocation or of the support aid up to 25 years of age for those young who continue their studies, no matter if institutionalized, fostered, entrusted or protected and supported by their own families.
- Successor allowances for the orphans by one or both parents, for all the duration of studies, up to at most 25 years of age.
- Financial allocations above mentioned represent direct transfers to the beneficiaries, being supplemented by a number of additional payments, coming from the State Budget, as well, in view of complementing the allocations for food, clothing, equipments, etc.

- **Social Services**

- The net of special schools, differentiated according to the main categories of handicap, social - rehabilitation - intended. The net consists of all levels of schooling (from nursery-schools up to high-schools).

- Kamin-hospitals for severely-handicapped, in which children are protected up to their 18 years of age.
- The specialized net for protecting children who cannot be granted any care by their own families. The category of "children at risk" consists of orphans, abandoned children or taken over by the State (from their families in difficult situations or from parents declined from their parental rights), deficient children or those with behavior disturbances. All these are granted one of the following types of protection:

Table 4. Alternative forms of protection

Categories of Children	Alternatives of Protection
Orphans	- tutorship - guardianship - entrustment to a family/person - adoption - institutionalization
Abandoned or Taken over by the State	- tutorship - guardianship - fostering - entrustment to a family/person - adoption - institutionalization
Deficient	- differentiated psycho-pedagogical activity - institutionalization
Children with behavior disturbances	- preventive and improving medical and psychological assistance - special supervision - institutionalization in schools of work and re-education

- Providing the protective institutions with a qualified staff, by amending some normative, on the structure and the dimension of the specialized staff, on various categories.
  Forming a net of personnel is of a longer duration, but it was started immediately after the revolution. Since 1990 there

have been organized pre-service and in-service training courses. In the field of social workers, Romania has rich traditions, since 1929, when "Principesa Ileana" Superior School of Social workers was founded and which became the Institute for Social Provisions in 1948, functioning up to 1952. In the latest two decades such schools functioned sporadically, but in 1991 this activity was started again. Thus, in the Universities of Bucharest, Cluj and Iaşi there have already been initiated Social Assistance Departments. Besides these, there are also the College for Social Assistance in Timişoara, the Orthodox Theological College for Social Assistance in Alba-Iulia, the Social Assistance Department within the Baptist Institute and the College for Social Assistance of the Protestant Church of Oradea.
Special attention is granted to providing the adequate medical staff and to increasing the educational one. Because pre-service and in-service training needs a long period of time, in baby-homes the medical staff is still insufficient and therefore the improving of the protection of the children is still precarious. Medical assistance in homes for children is ensured by nurses in clinics, hospitals, territorial dispensaries, and only a reduced number of institutions have at disposal medically specialized staff (psychologists, etc.).

Table 5. Staff in institutions for protection

Number of children for:	Existing situation	Provisions of the normative
- one physician	*)	40
- one nurse/auxiliary	*)	20
- one educator	15	20
- a group of children	25	12

*) insufficient staff in baby-homes and almost nonexisting in homes for children

- Prolonging the duration of children's protection in institutions or substitutive families, with the very consent of the children, up 25 years of age at most, for those who continue their studies when leaving compulsory education.

- Taking in delinquent children in schools of work and re-education or granting them special supervision in families in the case of children with no penal responsibility.
- Forming a new institutionalized system for protecting the children, after the revolution.

The policy of social work is more oriented to the transition from the institution-type (which will temporarily continue to hold a large share) to the family-type. In view of changing the forms of child-protection, the priorities will be:

- supporting families with children;
- avoiding children's institutionalization, through alternative family care;
- preventing child exploitation or neglection etc.

The whole activity of ameliorating the legal framework on child protection is in full agreement with the provisions of the "Convention on the Rights of Child" and of the "World Plan of Action on Child Survival, Education and Development".

Governmental and Non-governmental Structures Implied in Child Protection

At national level, the actions of promoting and protecting the interest of the children are coordinated, function of the specificity of the program, by the following instances:

- central bodies of the public administration: Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Youth, Department for Local Public Administration.
- specialized governmental bodies: the Romanian Committee for Adoption, founded by Governmental Decision no.63/1991, the National Committee for Child Protection (with inter-ministerial character) Founded by Governmental Decision no.99/1993, the State Secretariat for the Handicapped, founded by Governmental Decision no.1161/1990.

- non-governmental organizations: the Romanian National Committee for UNICEF, "Save the Children" Organization, "Our Children" Foundation, the "Charitable Romanian Society" (CARROM), the organizations "Caritas" and "Christiana", the "Romanian Association for the Rights of the Child", the association "The Hope", the "Association for the Support for the Homes for Children", "SOS-Children's Villages-Romania", "Concordia", the "Romanian League for Mental Health", "Health Messengers", the "League of the Romanian Orthodox Youth", the "Romanian Association Against-AIDS", all these representing only a part of the Romanian non-governmental organizations which, together with the foreign ones that are acting in Romania reach the figure of 400.
- institutions with both governmental and non-governmental character implied in the protection of children.
  - the "Institute for Mother and Child Care" (founded in 1970), extended after the Revolution and consists of hospitals, pediatric clinics, the Center for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped Children, etc., being at the same time a national methodological center for postgraduate research and education, for specializing and training in-service the net of medical and protective work.
  - the "Institute for the Child and the Family", founded in 1992, at the initiative and with the support of "Medicines du Monde", of personalities of Romania, of same associations and NGO-s, among which UNICEF.

FORMS OF ORGANIZING THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE CHILDREN WITH A NORMAL PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Organizing and Functioning Principles

In Romania, according to the Constitutional provisions, state education is free and granted to all the children, irrespective of social or ethnic origin, sex or religion. Romania's legislation, in this respect, is therefore in full agreement with the international one, granting the schooling of all the children up to their 16 years of age.

Education is organized mainly by the State, having an open character and granting every citizen the access to all grades and types of education, as well as the possibility of passing from one type of school to another. The latest three years have been marked by the appearance of private education institutions, especially for higher education.

Education of all grades is delivered in Romania. Citizens of the national minorities are granted, within the curriculum, the study of the mother-tongue and the teaching of subjects in their respective language, thus being offered the possibility to study the specific cultural and historical traditions, in view of preserving and developing the national-cultural inheritance. Thus Government Decision no.461/1991 stipulates:

Art. 41 "Children and students belonging to national minorities are granted equal conditions of general education and training in their mother-tongue, just like those of the Romanian nationality."

Art. 42 "In those localities with national minorities, nursery schools, primary and secondary schools, normal schools, classes, groups or sections mother-tongue-based are organized. Romania's history and geography are taught in Romanian".

Art. 44 At any types of contests or entrance examinations, the candidates belonging to national minorities can take the verification tests in their mother-tongue, if having studied those subjects in it."

According to these provisions, education for the minorities is organized as it follows:

Hungarian-based education is organized in 2,377 units, sections and universities and consists of 216,037 children and students. Students of Hungarian ethnic origin can study objects in their mother-tongue in the "Babes-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca, in the Medical and Pharmacy University and in the Drama Institute of Târgu Mureş. At students' request new Hungarian-based sections, have been organized (mathematics, physics, history o.s.o.) at the University of Cluj-Napoca. The training of educators and teachers for the Hungarian-based nursery-schools and primary schools is realized in 7 high schools and in the University of Cluj-Napoca, and of other University Centers.

German-based education is realized in regions with more numerous german ethnic population, in the 1992/1993 schools year being enrolled 19,986 pupils in nursery schools, primary schools, lower-and higher-secondary-schools and vocational-schools. The training of the German-based teachers and educators is realized in the Pedagogical High-School of Sibiu in the Universities of Bucharest, Timişoara, Cluj-Napoca, Iaşi and Sibiu.

For other minorities, less numerous (Serbians, Ukrainians, Czech, Slovaks, Bulgarians, etc.), there are as well, mother-tongue-based, sections and schools.

Child care in institutions can begin a 3 months of age, and it is provided through crèches; after this age children are educated in proper units of the educational system.

Crèches belong to the Ministry of Health and benefit only by medical staff. Children enrolled in this type of units have their own families, but because both parents have jobs and, as a consequence, do not have the time to take care of and educate their children, they entrust their babies in daily (**a**) or weekly (**b**) care to this type of institutions. During 1989-1992 the number of these units has decreased 10%, and the number of the children here enrolled, 26.1%, mainly because of the new possibilities mothers have, at present, namely to take care of their babies up to their 1 year of age. The largest reduction in number appeared in weekly program crèches (in 1992 - their number was with 14.7% smaller than in 1989). This is but the normal consequence of the reduction of the number of confinements, of the lowering of the population's income and to the removal of the female labour force.

Table 6. Number of institutions and number of children

Indicators		1989	1990	1991	1992
Number of crèches, out of which:	**total**	**847**	**840**	**819**	**762**
	(a)	677	682	656	617
	(b)	170	158	163	135
Numbers of beds, out of which:	**total**	**77,874**	**76,944**	**74,608**	**61,407**
	(a)	59,610	59,932	57,108	46,934
	(b)	18,264	17,012	17,500	14,473
Children enrolled, out of which:	**total**	**49,342**	**47,239**	**40,769**	**36,443**
	(a)	36,819	36,073	30,569	27,177
	(b)	12,523	11,166	10,200	9,266

(Center of Calculation and Medical Statistics - CCMS)

If in 1989, some, 71% of the existing crèches were sponsored by enterprises. In 1991 their number decreased very much, and in 1992 they were no longer supported as they brought no profit to the enterprises; but they continue to exist, being subordinated to the Ministry of Health. **The medium number of children/medical worker** is of 14, the number of children/auxiliary is of 8-9 children. In the crowded urban regions **the ratio children/physician** decreased from 350 in 1989, to 287-in 1992.

Both in daily and in weekly crèches parents pay some of the expenditures for children, especially those related to accommodation and meals, depending on incomes, reductions up to 50% of the costs may be granted. Crèches have no educational program, since they have no specialized staff. However, at present there are tested some experimental educational programs.

The Educational System propper, guided by the Ministry of Education, enrolls children starting with 3 years of age and has the following structure:

- **pre-primary education** - is organized for children between 3 and 7 years of age and is carried out in part-time (4 hours) and full-time (8-10 hours) and weekly nursery-schools;

- **primary education** - (1^{st} to 4^{th} form) enrolls children starting with their 6-7 years of age (the legal age school access being that of 6);

- **lower-secondary education** - (5^{th} to 8^{th}); together with primary education forms the general compulsory education;

- **higher-secondary education** - enrolls children admitted by entrance examination in high-schools, teacher's training schools and to seminaries; day courses (9^{th}-12^{th} form), evening and extra-mural courses (9^{th}-13^{th} form);

- **vocational education** - enrolls in vocational and apprentice schools leavers of the 8^{th} form, having not passed the entrance examination in the high-school or students having chosen this type of education, they being thus granted schooling up to their 16 years of age (the duration of the studies is of 2-3 years); when leaving this type of schools children can continue their studies in another form of higher secondary education;

- **technical education for foremen;**

- **post secondary education;**
- **higher education** - colleges (duration of 2-3 years) and universities (duration 4-7 years).

Concrete Aspects Regarding the Educational System in Romania

The descending demographic evolution, as well as the economic and social difficulties of the transition (population's pauperization, unemployment, emigration, etc) have conducted to the decreases of the number of students enrolled at various educational levels, and therefore of the school population in ratio to the total of the population.

Table 7. School population in ratio to the population of Romania

Indicators	1989/1990	1990/1991	1991/1992
- school population	**5,544,648**	**5,036,379**	**4,774,836**
- ratio of the total population	**24,0%**	**21,6%**	**20,6%**

(Ministry of Education: Statistic Documentary)

However we have to mention the fact that Romania is situated among countries with a high schooling rate, and for comparison we could chose 1991/1992 school year:

Bulgaria	- 17.9%	Austria	- 17.3%
Czechia-Slovakia	- 18.8%	Italy	- 16.6%
Hungary	- 17.1%	France	- 16.9%
Poland	- 19.4%		

Pre-primary education has a preponderantly educational profile, without a compulsory character, being a support for in-service parents and having the twofold objective of care too. They are mainly public units and in 1991/1992 school year the first five part-time private nursery-schools have been registered. In the latest three years the number of nursery-schools has considerably decreased because of the same reasons as in the case of crèches,

therefore if in 1989/1990 school-year in these units were enrolled 82.9% of the children of the corresponding age, their number has continuously decreased, reaching in 1992 - 51.9%. For this form of education the costs are partially supported by the families, partially by the State budget, the part-time nursery school excepted, because of being free of charge. Though the number of children enrolled has the general tendency of decrease, due to the gratuity of the part-time nursery-schools the number of children enrolled in this type of units is slightly increasing. In spite of the general tendency of decrease, the number of educators has increased, leading to a modification of the ratio children/educator from 28 in 1989/1990 school-year to 22 in 1990/1991 school-year, thus conducing to the amelioration of the educational conditions.

Table 8. Pre-school education

Indicators	1989/1990	1991/1992
Number of nursery-school	**12,006**	**12,492**
Number of children, out of which:	**825,232**	**733,954**
- in part-time nursery schools	609,126	559,856
- in full-time nursery schools	202,187	165,239
- in weekly nursery schools	13,919	8,859
Number of educators/teachers	**29,594**	**34,024**

(Ministry of Education: Statistic Documentary)

However, in the crowded urban areas groups of 30 children/educator still exist. Usually the activity in the nursery- schools is carried on according to age-groups corresponding to the physical and mental development of the child. On the contrary, in some rural and isolated areas (in the largest part of the cases), where the number of children attending nursery-schools is more reduced, the groups are smaller, gathering children between 3 and 7 years of age.

In 1991/1992 school year, out of the total number of children enrolled in this type of units, 92.4% were attending Romanian-based nursery-schools, 6.4 - Hungarian-based; 0.9 - German-based; 0.3 - other minority-language based.

The activities in nursery-schools is carried out according to a

curriculum worked out by the Ministry of Education. After 1989, the highly politicized curriculum, even at this level, was modified, concentrating on the development of language, the knowledge on the environment, music, first concepts of mathematics, a.s.o. The new curriculum aims mainly at two objectives: that of stimulating the development of the child as an individual and as a social being, and his training for the school years. In many nursery schools foreign languages, swimming, gym, instruments are taught, with the financial support of the parents. At present, new types of nursery schools based on Waldorf and Montessori alternative pedagogues are experimented.

Primary and lower secondary education is compulsory and enrolls all the children between 6(7) and 15(16) years of age. The 10 form compulsory education till 1989, was reduced to 8 form obligatory education (4 form - primary education + 4 form lower - secondary education). The new law of education, at present in debating and completion, will state its duration.

By 1989, the school-age population was almost 100% enrolled. The promotion of the form was a prior objective of the schooling policy and, under such circumstances, pupils' failure to get promoted was very reduced. Starting with 1989/1990 school-year the failure rate maintained itself as much as 4.3 for primary education and has continuously increased reaching 6.7 for lower-secondary education, this being the first signal of giving up the former imposed policy of quasi-automatic promotion.

An important step, after the revolution, is that of introducing foreign languages teaching/study in the curriculum since the 2nd form, which together with drawing, music and sporting are now being taught by specialized teachers.

A number of 36.4 thousand students enrolled in this form (1.4 of the total) of education benefitted by scholarships in the 1991/1992 school-year.

Table 9. School units and number of children - Primary and lower-secondary education in 1991/1992 school year

Teaching language	Number of units	Students
Total	13,847	2,608,119
Romanian	12,525	2,461,688
Hungarian	1,139	134,486
German	127	10,167
Serbian	24	575
Slovakian	26	918
Ukrainian	3	140
Czech	3	145

(NCS: Statistic Notes on primary and secondary education)

The number of teachers has continuously increased, so that the rate students/teacher in 1991/1992 school-year was of 22 in primary education and of 15 in lower-secondary education (as compared to an European average rate of 19,6, and a CEE rate of 19.1%). This evolution is corroborated with the steps, taken after the revolution, on reducing the teachers' norms and the number of students per class. In spite of the fact that at national level the students/teacher rate is quite reduced, 914 schools in the urban area functioned in 3-4 shifts per classroom. On the contrary, in some rural and isolated areas, due to the reduced number of children there have been organized forms with simultaneous teaching for primary education, and classes functioning on modules of subjects for lower-secondary education.

Higher-secondary education consists of high schools, vocational schools, technical post-high-schools for foremen. During 1980-1989 all lower-secondary school leavers were enrolled in a form of higher-secondary-education, 10 form education being compulsory.

Table 10. The structure of students in the main high-school profiles.

Profile	1989/1990	1990/1991	1991/1992
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
Theoretical	3,9%	17,5%	32,0%
Industrial and Agricultural	90,2%	72,5%	51,9%
Economic,administrative	3,9%	5,5%	7,3%
Other profiles	2,0%	5,0%	8,8%

(NCS: Statistic Note-Books on high-schools)

High-schools were preponderously (some 90%) industrial or agricultural, thus diminishing the level of general-culture education in favor of vocational training, neither this one being of on acceptable level. Immediately after the revolution the structure of the profile was considerably modified by the increase of the number of theoretical high-schools (Table 10), their number reaching today the number of 430 as compared to 95 in 1989. Once with all this the curriculum and the content of the school books were improved.

Table 11. High-school education in evolution between 1989-1990.

Teaching language	1989/1990		1990/1991		1991/1992	
Total	1,346,315	100%	995,689	100%	778,420	100%
Romanian	1,308,442	97.2	952,058	95.6	742,747	95.4
Hungarian	33,555	2.5	41,367	4.2	33,409	4.3
German	3,910	0.3	1,730	0.2	1,605	0.3
Other minorities' language	408	0.	534	0.	621	0.

(NCS: Statistic Note-Books on High-Schools)

At present the study of foreign languages has been stressed, their teaching getting an ever larger space in the curriculum, starting from primary school level. Foreign language secondary and high schools have been founded (French - "Jules Michelet", English - "George Coşbuc", Spanish - "Cervantes", German - "Friederich Schiller", all in Bucharest but having similar correspondents all over the country). At the same time, in a large number of schools, foreign language-based classes have been initiated (starting with the 5th form).

A substantial progress in improving the quality of higher-secondary education has been done by changing the type of school-leaving examination, purely formal before, but turning into an exam in full agreement with the level of competence and exigencies of all the western European countries.
In spite of the all the improvements within the system of education, the number of students that still make options for this schooling form is continuously decreasing especially due to the doing away with the first compulsory level of higher-secondary education.

Vocational education, was attended by school-leavers of the first compulsory level of higher-secondary education (9^{th} - 10^{th} forms). Since 1990 in the vocational and complementary or apprentice vocational schools (newly founded) are enrolled lower- secondary-school-leavers having chosen this type of education or having failed the entrance- examination in high schools.
A large number of students (3.7% in high schools and 40.5% in vocational schools benefit by scholarships).

Table 12. Number of students enrolled in vocation education

Form of education	1989/1990	1990/1991	1991/1992
Total	304,533	353,520	362,672
-Vocational schools for lower-secondary school leavers	-	89,189	133,843
-Vocational schools for 10 years-education leavers	304,533	196,217	126,303
-Complementary or apprentice vocational schools	-	68,114	102,526

Tertiary education consists of post-high-school education and higher education.

Post-high-school education was re-started after the revolution training staff for: medical care, libraries, economic field, etc;

Higher education is organized in two forms:

- short term higher education (colleges with a duration of 2-3 years);
- long term higher education (with a duration of 4-7 years)

By 1989 higher education just like all to other forms of

education were exclusively organized by the State, stressing in this case as well, the technical education. Its characteristic syntagm was "education-research-production", extended even to lower-secondary education. Higher education was extremely rigidly organized, passing from one department to another necessitating a new entrance examination. Before 1980 the study of psychology, sociology, pedagogy, were interdicted whereas marketing, management, ecology had never been studied. Immediately after the revolution of December public higher-education was granted a deep interest. Thus, starting with 1990/1991 school year the number of universities was enlarged and this tendency was accentuated in the following year, the number of departments reaching in 1992 the figure of 257, as compared to 101 in 1989. At the same time the rate of day courses has reached 74.2 in 1991/1992 as compared to 57.7 in 1989/1990. The scarce domains (economic and industrial management, biochemistry, etc.) started to be studied, and the domains interdicted by 1980, are now being studied, again. As the rate of the technical profiles has diminished, higher education has a new image.

The curriculums of these institutions have been substantially restructured and improved, in the attempt to bring them closer

Table 13. Structure of higher education (major domains)

Domains of higher education	1989/1990	1991/1992
- university	9.6	16.0
- technical	64.9	57.5
- agricultural	3.9	3.8
- economic	9.4	11.5
- law	1.4	3.5
- medicine	10.2	10.1
- artistic	0.6	1.4

(calculated on the basis of NCS: Statistical Note-Books on higher-education).

to similar institutions in other countries. In some of them, starting with the first year of study, French and English -based sections have been founded.

Once with the new curriculum the professorial staff increased from 14,363 (1989) to 29,805 (1992).
The number of students of public higher-education has increased from 679 students/100.000 inhabitants in 1989/1990 to 1040 in 1992/1993, Romania remaining therefore among the countries with the lowest rate. Besides State (Public) Universities there are also private universities, that started functioning in 1990. The status of these private institutions is not yet clear, the draft Law of Education proposing thus the setting of a Credential Commission of all the higher education institutions.

A large number of students (40,0%) benefit by scholarships.

An absolutely necessary modification of the centralized character of the organization of the higher education institutes, after the revolution was brought about by granting the university autonomy.

Education was financed from the budget and between 1985-1989 the subsidies represented 2.5% of the GDP, thus being insufficient. By eliminating in 1990 some funds from the GDP - the fund for social protection (previously within GDP) became an independent one, this leading to a rate of 3.2% and in 1992. Under this new structure, in 1991 the rate for education within the GDP reached 3.8% to decrease again to 3.1%, due to the difficulties of the transition period, thus making Romania continue to be situated among the countries with the lowest rate allocated from the GDP to education (Bulgaria - 6.9, Poland - 4.4, Hungary - 6.6, Germany - 4.5, France - 5.7, Belgium - 5.1, Greece - 2.9). This aspect is reflected in the precarious material resources of the education of any level.

Research for education was re-started after 1990 after an 8-year interruption; during which almost no kind of activity of the kind existed. The absence of this activity and the relative isolation face to the scientific preoccupations abroad, had negative

consequences upon education. Through the re-establishing of the "Institute of Educational Sciences" and through the increase of teachers', researchers', educators' access to information , there has been created the possibility of approaching various aspects related to education in view of the reform and of the strategies of education and social integration of the children and the young.

THE SITUATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Socially Disadvantaged Children: Forms of Protection

General Aspects

The hardest inheritance of the totalitarian period, that is the institutions for social protection, enrolling a large number of children, registered themselves among the prime emergency measures after the revolution. The condition of these institutions, the subnutrition, the high rate of morbidity, the lack of the most elementary hygiene conditions, as well as acute lack of the staff, shocked the whole world, the population of Romania included. After the revolution, through a sustained effort from the State budget and with the human and the material support within the country and from abroad, emergency steps to remedy this state of things were taken; the food allocation was doubled, preventive and hygienic measures were taken, the ferret out of children with hard maladies was started; in a short period of time the situation of these children was ameliorated, many of them becoming the object of domestic and international adoptions. In 1992 a new wave of admittances took place, almost half of them at parents' demand. This phenomenon was the object of a research by the Institute of Researches in Labour and Social Protection carried out within an analysis on the socio-economic situation of the child in the period of transition , on the basis of which the main causes of children's institutionalization were being identified. The research has proved that the main cause of institutionalization is the economic decline generated by the transition, with all its consequences: unemployment, decrease of the population's incomes and pauperization.

Table 14. Main causes of institutionalization

Causes	Rate of representation in sample
1. Parents without jobs	73.7%
2. Families with difficult living conditions	66.5%
3. Families with insufficient incomes	64.8%
4. Disorganized families (alcoholic parents or in detention, divorced or with a low educational level)	57.3%
5. Ill or handicapped parents	35.9%
6. Mothers under 18 years of age	8.4%

(data based on the information of the Institute of Researches in Labour and Social Protection)

The analysis appreciates that, in 1991, the sum for supporting a child, in a family with two minimum salaries, represented half of the allocation for a child in an institution, thus explaining some families' options for the children's protection by the State.

Forms of Family Protection for the Orphans and for the Abandoned.

Since 1970, in Romania, there have existed alternatives of protection, paying special attention to families or individuals offering to substitute the natural families, in the impossibility of taking care of their own children. Thus, many of the children were fostered or entrusted, the main difference between the two forms being that, in the case of the former the consent of the natural parents was necessary. The number of the entrusted children is larger than the number of the fostered ones. The families replacing the natural parents are helped by the State through an allocation. At the end of 1989-115 children were fostered and 5,615 were entrusted, and in 1991 both these forms of protection covered 9,141 children.

Another form of protection is the adoption. Romania is among the countries accepting and authorizing the adoption in the interest of the child, according to the provisions of article 21, letters "a-e" of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

By 1990, when some of the legal dispositions referring to adoption were modified, the consent on the adoption was the competences of the Tutorial Authorities. Law no.11/31, July 1990, sets adoption to legal instances. They have the obligation

to verify if the conditions stipulated in article 20, letter "a" of the Convention are met and if, according to law and on the basis of the information on the child's situation face to his parents, relatives or legal representatives, whose consent is demanded by law, have agreed the adoption in full cognizance. The legal instances watch that the adoption does not take place in cases when this is prohibited by law.

Adoption can be agreed upon - if all the legal requirements are met only by the legal instances and if on the basis of the information and notifications obtained, they realize that the person who adopts can grant a normal physical and moral development, and the adoption is not done with the purpose of exploitation or other reasons against the law or the regulations of social companionship (art.72 - Family Code).

By permitting the adoption by foreigners, the Romanian Law has not initially previewed priority for the national adoptions. Due to this fact in 1990 a large number of adoption were registered. Law no.11/1990 was complemented and republished in 1991. The new law restricts the category of children that can be adopted by citizens outside Romania or by Romanian citizens domiciling abroad, by giving priority to Romanian citizens domiciling in Romania; granting therefore the agreement with the provisions of art. 20, letter "b" of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Unlike the adoption by a Romanian citizen, domiciling in Romania (for which the agreement is under judicature competences), the international adoption can be agreed only by the county judicature, where the child lives.

The Court will agree the adoption of a Romanian child by a foreigner only if the child is under the evidence of the Romanian Committee for Adoptions (C.R.A.) and if there is no other demand for adoption by a Romanian citizen domiciling in Romania.

Founded in 1991, C.R.A. is meant to act, together with similar bodies in other countries, for granting the respect of norms of the Romanian legislation on granting the corresponding care of the adopted child, after he leaves Romania; at the same time they have to watch that the adoption does not turn into a material

profit or into any other consequences, contrary to the supreme interest of the child, in keeping with the provisions of article 21, letters "c, d" of the Convention.

C.R.A. acts for the separation of the children from their parents when it is in the interest of the former and tries to find an adoptive family, in cases when fostering, as a temporary solution for some of these children, is not possible.

Romanian families can demand adoptions by means of C.R.A. and directly from specialized institutions.

In what regards the national adoptions, between 1991-1992, some 2,300 demands were registered and solved (in a relatively equal number for each of the 2 years).

For international adoptions, according to Law 11/1990 some 10,000 demands were approved between January 1990 and July 1991. After their foundation, C.R.A. demanded and obtained the modification of the above mentioned law; afterwards, the number of international adoptions has significantly decreased - 155 between April and December 1992, and 98 in the first term of 1993.

C.R.A. works only with adopting agencies recognized by their respective countries and with which the former have concluded agreements. In view of choosing the best family for a child, C.R.A. completes a file of the potentially adoptive family, presented by various agencies, and the child's medical, psychical and social file, the matching to grant the interest of the child. The protection of the child continues after the adoption, as well, by watching his evolution; in the case of the national adoption the watching is done according to the law, by the Tutelary Authority with whom C.R.A. makes exchanges of information; in what regards the international adoption the match is done, on a period of at least two years, by the agency taking over the case. Unhappily, in the protective institutions there are still very many abandoned children, and thus being unadaptable, according to the present legislation, which needs amendments.

During the seminar organized by the Committee for Supporting Children Protection Institutions and by the Romanian Committee for Adoption, with the support of Service Social International and Defence des Enfants International, in June 1991, a new idea was imposed, namely that national adoption is prior to international adoption only if, in the origin country, corresponding solutions for the child in cause have not been found.

Institutionalized Forms of Protecting the Children

Children's protection in institutions is carried out through: Baby homes and Homes for the Children, function of their age-group.

Baby homes are institutions offering care to children between 0 and 3 years of age, and carrying out their activity under the guidance of the Ministry of Health. Statistic information on baby homes (Table 15) prove

Table 15. Baby homes

Indicators	1989	1990	1991	1992
Number of units	65	64	62	62
Number of children	10,954	8,286	7,968	9,979
Staff				
- number of doctors	217	224	237	229
- number of nurses	1,978	1,913	1,647	1,713
- auxiliary sanitary staff	3,090	4,050	3,718	3,761

(Calculation and Sanitary Statistic Center C.S.S)

the decrease of the number of children in baby homes with almost 20%, due:

- to the abrogation of the legislation prohibiting abortion;
- to the transfer of the children in other institutions of protection;
- to the large number of adoptions of some of the children from these institutions.

The emergency measures aimed at improving the conditions of the

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baby homes, by substantial supplementation of the allocations for food, clothing and medical assistance , and by the increase of the specialized staff, who in 1990 was insufficient and, generally, under the level of the necessary qualification.
Thus, the number of the auxiliary staff (attendants, auxiliaries, etc.) has been improved, so that if in 1989 each of them had in charge 10.5 children, in 1990 they had only 6 (covering the 3 shifts). 1992, full transition period, registered an increased number of enrollments. Under the circumstances of abortion liberalization and of a sustained contraceptive education, only comparatively better conditions of the baby homes against reduced possibilities of growing and taking care of the children in families, can determine parents to enroll their children in such institutions. Actually, budgets allocated to baby homes, are far higher than any sums allocated to other protecting institutions, thus explaining the above mentioned phenomenon.

The homes for children are institutions guided by the Ministry of Education, and they protect children starting from their 3 years of age up to the moment of leaving compulsory education units. In these homes the young who continue their studies are also enrolled. The homes are organized on age groups:

- homes for the pre-school children;
- and homes for the school children.

The years 1991/1992 marked the beginning of a new type of experiment, that is of prolonging the children's protection in baby homes up to their 5 years of age, adapting corresponding by the curriculum, and transferring them, afterwards, to new types of institutions: homes for the preschool and school children with a duration of only one year, forerunner of the school years and with a preponderantly educational character.

Table 16. Homes for the pre-school children

Indicators	1989/1990	1990/1991	1991/1992	1992/1993
Number of units	67	70	69	64
Number of children	8,200	6,724	6,071	6,512
Number of educators	2,740	4,050	1,696	1,802

(Ministry of Education: Statistic Documentary)

Statistics on homes for pre-school children prove a sudden decrease of the number of children immediately after the revolution. This has again the explanation in the increased number of adoptions of 1990. One can also mention the increase with 50% of the number of the teaching staff, so that the rate children/educator is 5 in 1990, (covering all the three shifts). If, for 1989-1991, information furnished by the National Commission for Statistics referred to all the homes (common and disabled children included) (Table 17) , for 1991/1992 information refer only to homes for common children which figure

Table 17. Homes for school children during 1989-1990

Indicators	1989/1990	1990/1991
Number of units*)	160	163
Total number of students	40,223	36,716
- pupils **)	28,954	26,144
- pupils and students in homes	11,269	10,572
- Teaching staff	1,791	2,835

*) the figures refer also to homes for children attending special schools
**) almost 20% of these children-in homes for the handicapped.
(Ministry of Education - Statistic Documentary)

in the evidence of the Ministry of Education. According to all these data, in the mentioned year there existed **178 homes**, out of which:

- 56 for pre-school children;
- 11 for pre-school and school children, newly organized under this form;
- 111 for school children.

Out of the **27,117 children** protected by these institutions:

- 41,6% were enrolled at parents' demand;
- 26.8% being orphans or having unknown parents.

8,800 pupils and students, enrolled in Homes, continue their

education after leaving compulsory education.
After the revolution the situation of these children has substantially improved, due to the efforts of the State (the increase of the budgetary allocations), but also due to the efforts of organizations and private persons in the country or from abroad.
The daily allocation for food granted from the State budget, was at mid - 1992 of 184 lei for a pre-school child and of 169 lei for a school child, at the end of the year the average allocation being of about 200 lei. A simple reckoning, on the basis of the family budget in 1992 (NCS - 1992), indicates the sum of 169 lei spent average for food by a person in a common family, thus indicating an equal figure with the daily food allocation for an institutionalized child. This proves again the high level of the budgetary allocation for the institutionalized child.

Though the conditions in Homes have substantially been ameliorated, there exist preoccupations for offering new solutions of protection and care, closer to the family-type.

Such a solution is that called "Glade of the Sun", created by "Ion Tiriac Foundation", in Braşov, and consisting of 11 modern and multi-functional villas with a capacity of 9 children and a "mother", a nun with the role of the social worker, and a housekeeper. The complex will finally host 100 orphan children, having besides the mentioned staff a psycho-pedagogical and medical office. The complex has also a nursery-school for children between 3 and 5 years of age and it is equipped with an optimum play ground. Its whole pedagogical, psychological and social conception was rigorously elaborated, and children (from 5 years on) and the whole staff have been selected according to clear - cut psycho-pedagogical and competence criteria, with the support of the Institute of Educational Science and of the coordinating staff of "Glade of the Sun - Braşov".

Another form of protection is that of the **villages for the**

orphans, "S.O.S. Kinderdorf International" has founded two such villages, one in Cisnădie, next to Sibiu town and one next to Bucharest. They consist of 12-15 small houses of the family type, hosting 6-8 children of different ages and a "social mother". The children are either orphan, or abandoned or coming from families with financial difficulties, and their education and training is realized intensively for a long period, followed by their integration in the surrounding community. Special attention is granted to the activities of the "village". In the center of the preoccupations there is the selection of the candidates for the position of "S.O.S. mother". They take training courses during which their ability to link affectively with the children and their behavior and capacity of adaptation to the conditions of such an activity are observed. Various means of expression and communication with children (handwork, drama and dancing, painting and drawing, and music) are participating means able to contribute to the promotion of children's individuality. Special attention will be granted to practical activities and to the religious education of the child.

Next to methods used within the experimental protecting and educating institutions for the orphans other methods are applied both in homes and in some units initiated by various Romanian or foreign NGO-s.

The first survey of all these strategies was carried out between 9-13 November on the occasion of the first National Forum of NGO-s on the subject "Child Protection-Passing from Emergency to Improved and Long-lasting Protection". The Forum formulated **new demands on the legislative reform** in the fields, in agreement with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and debated alternatives of institutionalization, education for health, family planning, national program against AIDS institutionalized children integration in the schooling system, handicapped children protection, formation and perfecting the staff in the field of child protection, etc.

Deficient Children; Forms of Protection

The images about the handicapped children in Romania that surrounded the world immediately after the revolution in December (presenting the inhuman conditions under which they were living) were so shocking, that they have created a deformed image on the dimension of these children in Romania. The homes for the deficient children had been deliberately neglected by the totalitarian system, the children being isolated from the outer communities, having totally insufficient human life conditions. This was included in the general context of privations to which the whole country had been subject. The total lack of educational staff, the lack of medical staff as well as the lack of interest of the in-service one, in baby homes, had extremely negative consequences on the physical and intellectual development of the children, generating handicaps and deepening the existing ones. These children had never been taught to speak, never been taught to walk, were sleeping two or three in the same bed, due to the absence of the most elementary medical and sanitary conditions. Crossing the first periods of their childhood in such difficult conditions, at the larger part of them **a false handicap had been installed, through sub-stimulation**. At this early age it was very difficult to distinguish a really handicapped child from a child with a handicap generated by the difficult life conditions and the lack of an emotional milieu. Such false handicapped children were transferred to special schools, where the conditions were not different at all from the ones they had before.

Immediately after the revolution emergency steps of investigating children's health state, with the purpose to identify those with real handicaps, and of passing to differentiated education, function of the psychic an physical development of the children, emergency steps for their recovery were taken. A higher food allocation, taking the children out of the subnutrition state in which they had been kept before and a sustained medical assistance have been offered to them in order to discover the

really handicapped ones, and their health state, many of them being identified as HIV/AIDS or AB hepatitis infested.

Worth mentioning is the special attention given to the education for these children and the numerical increase of the teaching and social staff, as well as the support offered by various organizations and persons from the country and from abroad through financial aid (for food, clothing, drugs or money) and more important through social assistance staff who has been directly working with these children, in view of their rehabilitation, thus contributing to the formation of a personal staff.

As a consequence of the efforts of the latest three years, after the revolution, **a large part of the deficient children have been or are being rehabilitated.**

It is not possible to make an evaluation of the real number of children with deficiencies in the period before the revolution, just because any kind of statistics were deliberately avoided. However the Calculation and Sanitary Statistics Center of the Ministry of Health tried such an estimation in 1989, by initiating a study on the health state of the population, in view of classifying the handicapped persons, according to age groups and categories of handicap. The results of the research, published in 1991, have grouped the handicapped persons in family care (non-institutionalized) in the following groups of age and categories of handicap: 0 - 4 years of age, 5 - 14 years of age, 15 - 64 years of age and after. The first two groups, refer to children up to 14 years of age (table 18), because 15-18 age group has not been studied distinctively.

Table 18. Handicapped children in family care, in 1989

Age group	Total number of children (handicapped or not)	Rate, in the age group, of the children				
		total no.	physically h.	psych. h.	visually h.	auditory h.
0 - 4 years	1,796,443	.0091	.0061	.0020	.0010	-
5 - 14 years	3,707,266	.0166	.0064	.0028	.0060	.0012

(CCSS - Research on the population's health)

The 0.91% of the children up to the age of 4 (almost 16,347) and the 1.6% of the children between 5 and 14 years of age (almost 61,540) leads to the estimation of 77,887 children in this situation, in 1989, all of them being non-institutionalized. At the same time in the specialized institutions were enrolled some 100,000 handicapped persons of all age groups, the number of children in this situation being much smaller. On the other hand the only institutions hosting children, no matter their health state were the baby-homes and the dystrophic section in the hospitals, and that's why one can mention that the number of the handicapped children between 0 and 3 years of age was under 13,500, this representing the total number of the institutionalized children in such units. All this proves the real dimension of the number of handicapped children in Romania, it not being as high as it was purposely tried to create the false impression. The statistics on institutionalized children in 1992 in units subordinated to the State Secretariat for the Handicapped (table 19) supports this statement, keeping also in mind the fact that the children enrolled in special nursery-schools or schools had been enrolled in baby-homes, nursery-schools or schools, three years before.

Table 19. Institutionalized handicapped children in 1992

Indicators	Number of units	Number of handicapped children		
		totally	physically	mentally
Total	**239**	**53,040**	**12,143**	**40,897**
- Special nursery-schools	12	659	153	506
- Homes with special nursery-schools	9	806	40	766
- Special schools	84	19,229	580	18,649
- Homes with special schools	34	6,803	102	6,701
- Special schools for visually deficient	5	1,049	1,049	-
- Special schools for auditory deficient	11	2,148	2,148	-
- Schooling Center	14	5,868	2,174	3,694
- Kamin-school	16	2,906	339	2,567
- Kamin-workshop	3	844	-	844
- Vocational schools	23	9,071	1,901	7,170
- Kamin-hospital for severely handicapped	28	3,657	3,657	-

(State Secretariat for the Handicapped - SSH - Statistic Information)

One of the emergency preoccupations immediately after the revolution, was that of improving the life conditions of the children enrolled in specialized protecting institutions, with

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the clear orientation of rehabilitating (some of) them. In 1991 was founded the most specialized institution in the field, that is the State Secretariat for the Handicapped which took under its guidance the pre-school and school units, for the handicapped except the baby-homes, which remained under the guidance of the Ministry of Health. In baby-homes there are enrolled the children between 0 and 3 years of age, period when it is rather difficult to diagnose a handicap. An attentive medical care for the child in his first three years of life has also in view the identification of deficient children and, function of their deficiency, at 3 years of age they are transferred in corresponding protecting units.

The children's transfer from the baby homes to specialized units for protecting pre-school children is carried out in the following way:

- the children with rehabilitating deficiencies are transferred in homes for children with special nursery schools; out of the total number of 35 homes for children existing in 1992, 9 have special nursery schools, hosting also 40 auditory deficient children and 766 mentally deficient children;

- severely handicapped children are transferred in kamin-hospitals.

Starting with their 6-7 years of age, children in the homes with special nursery-school, as well as those with rehabilitation deficiencies, protected previously by their own families are enrolled in homes for school-age children, according to their deficiencies, as it follows:

- rehabilitation deficient - in homes with special schools (in 1992 - there were 6,800 children enrolled)
- partial - rehabilitation deficient - in:
  - kamin-schools
  - kamin-workshop

  where they are trained for a trade adequate to the form and level of their deficiency; these units host

especially mentally-disabled and severely-physically disabled children; in 1992 in such units were enrolled 3,750 children.

- severely-handicapped children - in kamin-hospitals.

Kamin-hospitals are units, specially equipped for children up to their 18 years of age. In 1990, in these units were enrolled 3,354 children, to reach in 1992 the number of 3,477. In May 1993, in a very beautiful natural milieu in Grădinari, next to Bucharest, was inaugurated a modern kamin-hospital for deficient children offering best conditions of assistance and rehabilitation.
Kamin-hospitals or kamin-schools or kamin workshop are directly subordinated to the State Secretariat for the Handicapped. The other units for rehabilitation deficient children are subordinated both to the State Secretariat for the Handicapped and to the Ministry of Education. These units try to rehabilitate both children protected by their own families and the institutionalized ones, through methods specific to any kind of handicap.

The units for the rehabilitation of the handicapped (table 20) were functioning even before the revolution, trying to cover all categories of handicaps: mental, visual and auditory. The visually and auditory deficient children can benefit by two types of schools, as well: schools for the total and partially blind and schools for the deaf and for the hypo-auditory.

After the revolution, once with the improvement of the schooling conditions and in restructuring of the curriculum, the number of the staff and their training level have increased.
Huge efforts are done for the social integration of the disabled children, through activities very close to those of the common children and as an example we can mention some disabled children having participated to the Olympic Games for the Handicapped - Barcelona 1992.

In this line the data referring to the schooling of the almost 45,000 deficient children prove that almost 1/3 of them continue their studies after leaving the compulsory education, the larger part of them in vocational schools, high-schools and post-high-schools.

Table 20. The evolution of units and of the recovery deficient children

Indicators	1989/1990	1990/1991	1991/1992	1992/1993
1. Nursery schools for deficient children				
- number of units	35	34	34	36
- number of children	2,458	2,155	2,041	2,233
- number of teaching staff	694	1,034	591	632
2. Primary and lower-secondary schools for deficient children				
- number of units	134	136	138	141
- number of children	30,620	29,652	30,365	31,670
- number of teaching staff	4,568	5,871	6,012	6,330
3. High-schools for visually deficient and for rehabilitation physically deficient				
- number of units	6	6	4	5
- number of children	507	510	544	564
- number of teaching staff	41	46	40	43
4. Special Vocational schools				
- number of units	25	27	33	36
- number of children	12,280	12,310	12,631	12,703
- number of teaching staff	421	499	865	912
5. Post-high-schools				
- number of units	1	1	1	1
- number of children	44	48	76	70

(Ministry of Education -Statistic Documentary)

Vocational education for the deficient trains children in trades like: electronics, electrotechnics, industrial chemistry, food industry, light industry, agriculture, trading, small industry and services.

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The statistic situation of all the disadvantaged children (table 21) indicates, in 1992, a number of 90,136 children, out of which 53,040 handicapped, representing 58,8 % of this category and 1 % of the population between 4-18 years of age.

Table 21. Situation of institutionalized children in 1992.

Indicators	Composition		Rate according to age group
	Number	%	
Total	**90,136**	**100%**	
Children in baby-homes (0-3 years)	**9,979**	**11.1%**	**0.8%**
Children in homes for children (4-18 years)	**27,117**	**30.1%**	**0.5%**
Disabled children (4-18 years)	**53,040**	**58.8%**	**1.0%**
out of which:			
-according to forms of care:		**100.0%**	
- protecting units	11,359	21.4%	
- in families	41,681	78.6%	
-according to handicaps:		**100.0%**	
- rehabilitation	45,633	86.0%	
- partial rehabilitation	3,750	7.1%	
- severely handicapped	3,657	6.9%	

Children with Deviating Behaviour

Delinquent Children Institutionalization

●● Concrete Aspects

Transformations taking place in Romania in all fields - economic, social, spiritual, moral - in view of creating the constitutional state, the civil and democratic community, are accompanied by negative phenomena which are ever growing, and which turn into the increase of the number of persons committing facts of penal nature, many or them being children.

The statistics data held by police prove a large rate of children among the persons having committed penal acts against persons'life, integrity and health, against private and public

property, and the criminal rate is the highest, among this categories of the population. The age of children committing offences is ever lower their tendency of getting organized in groups has grown, prostitution, beggary, violence have increased.

Children up to 14 years of age have no penal responsibility and they are entrusted to special supervision of the family, under the guidance of the tutorial authorities and of the specialized psychologists.

Children between 14 and 18 years of age, having committed offence, are taken in Special Schools of Work and Re-education (Târgu-Ocna, Tichileşti, Craiova and Găeşti), depending on the Ministry of Justice, but also in prisons, some of which have special sections for children. Besides these, there are also young people between 18 and 25 years of age, having committed offence when children, they representing almost 50% of the total number of person taken in. Juvenile delinquency had some fluctuations between 1986-1988, due to the policy of distortion of the offence of that period, followed by acts of repeated and un-justified clemency. Neither 1990 can prove a basis of reference on the dimension of this phenomenon, because at the beginning of this year reparatory steps, less justified in this case, were taken.

Table 22. Number of children between 1983-1992

year	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
number	1,964	1,708	3,505	2,070	985	668	1,898	2,518	5,077	5,625

In the absence of some clemency acts, 1991 registered a high increase of the number of children taken in, and in 1992 these cases reached the number of 5,625, representing 12.8% of the total number of the population in prisons, that is less than 0.3% of the population between 14-18 years of age; taking into account

the fact that almost 50% of the young people taken in are more than 18 years old, the rate would be of about 0.15% children.
A few statistics concerning the juvenile delinquents according to:

- category of penal offence
  - 40% committed violent offences (murder, rape, armed robbery);
  - 60% committed offence against public patrimony.
- sex
  - 90% are boys;
  - 10% are girls.
- level of education
  - 28% of them are illiterate or have primary-education;
  - 50% of them have at most lower-secondary-education.
- their family background
  - 26% come from broken families;
  - 70% though from structured families, manifest deep deficiencies in what regards ,cohesion, conjugal climate, intra-family relations.
- according to area
  - 60% from urban area;
  - 40% from rural ares.

The national configuration, except the Gipsy ethnic category, representing about 25% of the total number of the children taken in, respects the national structure. The large number of juvenile delinquents coming from rural environment is due to the decrease of the social control of the village community, and to the temptations of the towns exercised upon these category of children.

At present, Special Schools of Work and Re-education concentrate their attention on the psycho-sociological know-how of the children, through their schooling and training, together with the Ministry of Education, by means of moral, religious, humanitarian, hygienic, health, sexual, cultural-artistic and

physical activities, in view of social re-insertion. They have the possibility of being released conditionally. Special Schools of Work and Re-education have qualified and specialized teaching-staff: primary and secondary teachers, foremen-instructors, psychologists and physicians. There are, however, difficulties determined by the material situation and by the lack of granting any favorable socio-professional integration for children qualified in a trade during their detention, due to their being rejected by communities, thus coming to relapse.

●● Preventive and Rehabilitation Programs

The amplitude of the behavior deviation with children has imposed preventive steps both on behalf of police and of other institutions in their right, especially schooling units. Therefore the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education have carried out a "Program for preventing Juvenile Delinquency", consisting of joint activities specific to schooling units and to police. The Program is in full consensus with the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Member States of the Council of Europe, where Romania has the status of special observer, on preventing murder.
In what regards juvenile delinquents offending the law, they are regarded as a result, as victims of an unfavorable milieu, thus deserving a humanistic treatment and action on behalf of society.
In the program there are included:

* general preventive actions:
  - including in the curriculum topics on the Constitution and on legislation;
  - joint - educational activities organized by the teaching staff and the police, in view of empowering children with the knowledge on legal norms and in view of informing them on juvenile delinquency;
  - publishing information bulletins for children (or magazine spaces dedicated to children) for promoting justice, legal

and moral ideas;
- identifying by school principals together with police experts the children at victim or offence risk, due to their family background, and trying to take protection and preventive steps adequate to each and every case.

* special preventive actions
  - making check-lists of children not attending school or having abandoned it and being in the situation of vagrancy and attempting their reintegration in their own or substitutive family (Home for children);
  - hosting, on limited periods of time, in Receiving centers for Children (under the age of 14) those who cannot be protected by their own families (or for whom there's no fostering/ entrusting possibility) and who committed repeated penal offenses, who ran away from Homes, who manifested vagrancy, begging or prostitution attitudes;
  - clarifying operatively the situation of children hosted in Receiving Centers in order to re-start education and training activities;
  - law informing activities for anti-offensive training of children in special schools and Homes for children.

* contributions to improving legislation protecting children
  - representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Ministry of Education will participate to the carrying out of the draft Law on Protecting Children;
  - including in documents on children's protection provisions in line with the "Convention on the Rights of the Child".

* elements on material basis necessary to protect and re-educate the Children
  - organizing, in big cities, receiving children centers, with the necessary spaces, equipments and specialized staff in order to continue the process of education, care and rehabilitation;

- organizing in Bucharest and in every county, depending on the number of children at antisocial behavior risk, Preventive Educational Centers, with a maximum capacity of 100 places and whose main objective is the educational support by including specialized preventive programs; these children will be educated or vocational-trained, identifying for them the possibilities of integration in production after obtaining the certificate.

The program, which does not exclude the possibility of the initiative of other legal institutions or organizations, and associations, private ones included, has the general objective of growing and educating children in Romania and the particular one of stopping juvenile-delinquency and the phenomenon known as "street-children".

Street Children

•• General Aspects

The circumstances having favoured the latest increase of the phenomenon known through the written and audio-visual media as "street-children", are both the effects of the decrease of the living standard of the family relations and the lack of a coherent governmental strategy in the field, with clear allocations of resources and responsibilities. To this we could add the false understanding to the idea of liberty, manifest not only at children's level, but at adult's level, as well, which is quite normal for the period the Romanian society undergoes, and which will diminish once with the assimilation of the real value of democracy and the real grasp of the notion of liberty. Romania has not long ago broken with a repressive and excessively authoritarian regime, and the mentioned children try to live the feeling of liberty this way, as well. The last consideration holds true for (a relatively small part of) "street children", for in some of the cases their family situation does not justify their state of "street children".

The larger part of "street children", however, come from marginalized families, "economically and socially", or from homes for children. The phenomenon existed before 1989, but at a smaller rate, due to the feeling of fear from the authorities of public order that children had (and which was present within the whole population) and due to big "escapes" from the protection institutions, in which hygiene, food, comfort conditions were precarious.

The existing administrative and legal system cannot face the phenomenon and is based mainly on coercive and punitive measures which have proved inefficient. There is a direct correlation between the increase of the number of "street children" and the increase of the juvenile delinquency rate. A new phenomenon present and dangerous among these children is represented by the drug addiction. By **"street children"** we mean children having run away from home or protective institutions, that spend day and night in the street, without being protected against, cold, illnesses, abuses, exploitation, violence, children that don't attend any form of education, on short, "children in danger", "children at risk". The children in this category can be divided in three groups:

- homeless children, that for years have had no contact with their own families (institutions);
- circumstantial vagrants, having run away from home or institutions and considering street life anyhow better than home or institution life;
- working children, that have contacts with their families on a regular base, but trying to meet their own and their families' needs by begging or working unqualified trades (cleaning car windows, transporting ballots, etc).

Their numbers is almost as high as 5,000 in Bucharest and the big cities of Romania, and can increase rapidly unless emergency steps not taken immediately, to prevent this phenomenon.

•• Programs of Prevention and Rehabilitation

In 1991, various governmental and non-governmental bodies have proposed themselves to specially deal with this category of children, thus starting a series of programs, among which:

- the program of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in Bucharest;
- the program of "Red Barnet" and "Save the Children" organizations in Dolj and Timiş counties;
- the "Caritas" program, in Bucharest.

These programs have the following characteristics:

- are based on a deep inter-departmental cooperation and on NGO support;
- they are action-based, more than preventive;
- they propose a new method of approaching and relating to "street children", doing away with coercive methods, and promoting children's participation in decision-taking for their future and protection, other than institutionalization;
- all the activities are regarded as an intermediate phase between life in the street and protective steps on long-term; return to the family and community, family fostering, protecting institutionalization.

All the steps in view of diminishing and preventing the social phenomenon known as "street children" are in full agreement with the Constitution and the un "Convention on the Rights of Child". This strategy within the "Governmental Program of Action" has the short-term objective to diminish the number of street children, and the medium and long-term objective to prevent the phenomenon.

Projects of action programs refer to:

- improving the organization and the functioning of the receiving centers;
- the rapid and efficient ferret of the vagrant, delinquent and psychically disabled children and their orientation towards specialized units;

- organizing small "social centers", of the open type, to which these children care appeal freely and which can meet their primary needs (food, shelter, emergency medical care, etc.);
- organizing "specialized centers" for re-educating, re-socializing, re-inserting socially the chronic vagrants and the drug-addicted;
- organizing "actions in the street" with the purpose to contact, know-how and transfer these children from the "street milieu" to a "place of life".

Projects of preventive programs are oriented to discovering the causes and conditions generating and favoring the phenomenon, having in view:

- actions referring to:
  - families with many children and a precarious economic situation;
  - social protection units, to prevent children, from leaving them;
  - schooling units, to discover circumstantial vagrants;
- public and authority awareness on the possible consequences of the phenomenon;
- training social workers and other staff (physicians, psychologists, sociologists, pedagogists, social workers) in view of better specialization in the field.

ASPECTS ON THE ORGANIZATION OF CHILDREN'S LEISURE TIME AND ON THE CULTIVATION OF THEIR SKILLS

Leisure Time Activities

Concomitantly with children's training and education within the school program proper, an ever greater importance is granted to cultivating children's special skills and to stimulating their creative potentialities.

Several gifted and talented children participate to the activities of Children's Clubs and Palaces, on the occasion of any type of events dedicated to children (as for instance the UNICEF galas) a.s.o. Within the leisure time activities of these units, besides the subjects studied in schools, others such as: informatics, bio-astronomy, ecology, science-fiction are taught aiming to cultivate and develop their curiosity and the scientific creativity, to adopt a inter-disciplinary and prospective manner of understanding phenomena.

A privileged place in the hierarchy of the institutions for children's leisure time is occupied by the National Children's Palace in Bucharest. It functions since 1986 and enrolls children between 4 and 18 years of age from all the schools and nursery-schools of the Capital. Teachers ensure the supervision, the instruction and the training of the children. The Palace disposes of performance halls, a large sports ground, a car park, a summer theater, a radio-TV studio, classrooms, labs, all equipped with everything necessary for the carrying out of various activities. Among the domains covered here, worth mentioning are:

- the cultural-artistic domain, consisting of 28 clubs, attended by 2,350 children, their objectives being both formative and informative, in view of cultivating children's artistic skills, that are displayed through painting and drawing exhibitions, performances, contests, radio and TV programs, creation camps, artistic tours; the artistic groups of the Palace have been awarded with prizes

at various national and international competitions and festivals (France, Poland, Hungary, Italy, Belgium);

- the sports domain is represented by the Sports Club of the Palace, consisting of 15 sporting disciplines, aimed to discovering the most gifted children in the field, out of the 1,000 enrolled in view of training them for the highest performances; the members of the club have successfully participated to national and international competitions, being awarded with remarkable prizes;
- the technical-scientific domain consists of 31 clubs attended by 60,000 children, out of whom 2,000 attend the informatics club; these clubs function according to annually conceived programs, meeting the demands and the interests of the children; their members have obtained individually or as a team 17 - 1st prizes, 9 - 2nd prizes and 8 - 3rd prizes at national and international contests, during the 1990-1993 period.

Such leisure time activities are taking place in other important urban centers as well (Timişoara, Braşov, Constanţa, Cluj-Napoca, Iaşi, Craiova, a.s.o.). In Timişoara there was founded the National UNICEF-UNESCO Center, whose objective is that of educating the young in the spirit of the protection of the environment.

Besides the activities in children's clubs and palaces, almost every school-unit has its own clubs on various subjects (mathematics, physics, biology, informatics, environment protection, playing an instrument, singing, folkloric groups, sports-tourism), which are attended by students according to their skills and preferences.

Such activities are organized in special schools too; a marvelous success was obtained by the Romanian children, having participated to the Olympic Games for the Handicapped - Barcelona 1992, who won several medals, the gold one included.

Special attention is granted to training the children in subjects

clubs (mathematics, physics, biology, Romanian and foreign languages) and to school olympiads, through specially conceived programs. For the national and international stages, study-camps are organized as well. The school olympiads for various school subjects, are organized for children starting with the 4th form and having several stages. For the students of the vocational schools there are organized trade contests. In 1992/1993 school year, after a selection through intermediate phases, 1,227 of lower-secondary students and 3,557 students of high-schools participated to the national phase of school-olympiads and 740 students participated to the trade contests. It is worth mentioning that Romania holds the 2nd place in what regards the prizes obtained at the international olympiads and trade contests.

In virtue of the right to diversification and to an adequate education Romania has started to grant special attention to gifted and overgifted students.
Specialized training in fields like music, fine arts, sports, etc. are thus continued. Even before 1989, there existed preoccupations for training of the children talented in arts and sports. Proof stand the music, ballet and fine arts high-schools, whose number has increased after the revolution (from 6 in 1989/1990 school-year, to 34 in 1991/1992 school year). A large number of these students have lately performed on national and international stages. At the same time the sporting-schools in Deva and Oneşti have formed champions in gymnastics and schools from other towns have formed champions in swimming, athletics, chess, etc.
Preoccupations of tradition aimed to these groups of children in the Romanian education are resumed and concretized in training children in classes of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.
At present in the other most important urban centers there are already functioning intensive classes on subjects, the children's selection having been realized in secondary-schools and in high-

schools through psychological tests of intelligence. There are also new initiatives of carrying out groups for the overgifted children even since pre-school education. A new curriculum stressing the aspect of enriching the knowledge in various fields, the acceleration of teaching and the assimilation of new techniques of intellectual independent work is being experimented.

A supplementary step in the scientific substantiation of the preoccupations for overgifted children was realized by including, since 1990, some research projects on the techniques of identification and of training the overgifted children, within the activity of the Institute of Educational Sciences. Other institutions such as: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, the National Commission for UNESCO, UNICEF, "Henry Coandă" Foundation for Overgifted Children manifest the same interest in this category of children.

Literature, Film, Radio-TV Programs for Children

In educating and socially integrating the children, a very important role is held by mass-media means.

Immediately after December 1989, lots of performances and publications for children concentrated on rendering the events of the revolution and the sacrifice of the young for liberty.

Films like "Detachment" (produced by Serban Comanescu) or "Trust" (produced by David Reu) presented subjects on this sacrifice.

Among the most recent films dedicated to children we can mention "The Nursery-school of St. Elefterie" and "High-school Students" (produced by Nicolae Corjos), "The Champion" dedicated to our girl-gymnasts (produced by Elisabeta Bostan), "If I were Peter Pan" (produced by Gheorghe Naghi), "Alexandra's Adventures" (produced by Cornel Diaconu), "Story with Woll Balls" (Isabela Retrasincu), "Music's Universe" (Radu Igagsag and Zeno Bogdănescu), "The New Adventure of the Musketeers" (Victor

Antonescu), "Travelling with Kipling" (Dan Cisovschi and Călin Cazacu), "The Tree and Woods" (Adela Crăciunescu), "The Story of Small Fir-tree" (Tatiana Apahidan) a.s.o. The Union of the Film Producers in Romania together with the Romanian National Committee for UNICEF organize film-galas for children, immediately followed by debates among the young and the producers.

The performances of the theaters for children in Bucharest ("Ion Creangă" Theater) and in other localities, as well as the puppet theaters ("Tandarica Theatre" in Bucharest and theaters in 15 other towns of the country) are highly appreciated by their audience. The "Theater for the Young" in Piatra Neamţ organizes a biennial festival with domestic and foreign participation.

Radio and Television displays programs whose frequency and diversification have highly increased lately. Television, through its larger impact on the public, has restructured its programs, offering a larger space to children. Besides the daily cartoons and films for children, worth mentioning are: the scientific and cultural programs ("Science and Imagination" "Preuniversitaria", "Teleenciclopedia, Discovering the Planet"), the foreign language teaching programs (French, English, German, Spanish and Russian), debate-programs, ("Hello, Friends"), entertaining and variety programs, games and contests where children and parents are directly implied. Radio supports school very much. Musical and informative programs dedicated to teenagers by the new broadcasting companies have started to function ("Radio-Youth", "Radio-Contact" "Delta", "Uni-Fun").

Publications have registered a real explosion lately, those for children included. The already existing magazines have improved their quality and new magazines have been issued: "Entom", "Children's Universe", "Ariel", "Start 2,001", "Children's Happiness", "Hello Friends" - as amusement magazines, "Mathematical Revue", "Physical and Chemical Revue", "Romanian-language and Literature", "Preuniversitaria", "Forum" - meant to

help children in their individual study, and "Tehnium", "Science and Technique", "Third Millennium" - promoting science. In the field of literature for children new books have been issued in the traditional publishing houses such as "Ion Creangă" or "Albatros", whereas new ones have appeared ("Junior Club" - initiating a series of books for the diaspora, "Trei iezi cucuieţi" - "Three Goat Kids" - publishing books for the little ones). The 800 new publishing houses include in their editorial plans at least one title of books for children every year. In spite of the fact that the number of the titles has increased, the material difficulties of the larger part of the families is an obstacle in procuring them. The really beautiful book for children undergoes a real crisis due to the technical and financial difficulties of the publishing houses. Books in four colors and on paper of a good quality still necessitate subventions, which, for the moment, are not available.

The material difficulties are overpassed, however through town and municipal libraries, as well as by libraries in the larger part of schools, thus facilitating children's access to information and culture.

Children's Organizations

A special role in children's participation to their own integration is occupied by children's organizations and associations.
By 1989 such organizations had a mass and quasi-compulsory character with political accents, organized on age groups, starting from pre-school age.
The change generated by the events in December brought about changes in this field as well. The first step meant the disolvation of the former organizations. Afterwards, due to the normal needs, generated by the leisure time activities and necessitated by the complementation of the activity of Children's clubs and the clubs in schools, new structures have appeared,

reflecting the preoccupations of their members. They consist of associations and foundations for children, with educational objectives, such as: "Romania's Pathfinders", "Health Messengers", "The League of the Romanian Orthodox Youth", "Teenagers Councils", etc. "Romania's Pathfinders" - nonpolitical and nongovernmental organization is ever larger integrating itself in the provisions of the "Constitution of the World Scout Movement" and on the basis of the "scout" method, it intends to cultivate and develop "the respect and the love for man and the environment, in view of creating responsible citizens, dignified members of the local national and international communities". "Children's International Summer Villages", "The International Federation of the Educational Communities", "AIDROM" make their contribution to creating the conditions for international children exchanges, having, at the same time, preoccupations for the formation of animators. A very important place in activities for various leisure time is played by UNICEF as well.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Children's health was deeply affected in the latest 15-20 years of the totalitarian period, by the forced birth policy and its consequences, by the inadequate food conditions, by the discriminating visions face to certain categories of children. The unfit equipments, the lack of staff, the insufficient conditions of hygiene are only some of the elements that characterized the health net of Romania.

After December 1989, there were taken emergency steps aiming at:

- the abrogation of abortion prohibition and an adequate contraceptive education;
- the supervision of children between 0-3 years of age, for preventing nutritional disturbances and the implementation of a rehabilitation program in due time;
- medical control of institutionalized children.

As a consequence of the medical controls, an alarming situation was discovered, namely a large number of persons AIDS-infested. Out of the cases registered up to the mid-1992: 90% were children and their larger majority (90%) were up to the age of 4, and mainly institutionalized children. Out of the 3,000 children AIDS-infested registered in Europe, more than half are Romanian, A national Anti-AIDS program was adopted and this is the result of a joint-action of the "ANTI-AIDS Association - Doris" - Bucharest, "Hope" - Constanţa, "Aesculap" - Iaşi, a.s.o. under the methodological guidance of the "Mother and Child Institute". Unhappily, a series of deficiencies in the health net, consequence of the financial difficulties of the transition period affected children's health. However mother and child health are granted special attention. Thus we can mention:

- free medical assistance;
- free drugs for pregnant women;
- preventive and infant care up to 1 year of age;

- free foods for infants, whose mothers cannot naturally feed them (at present, in spite of all the efforts of EEC and other international supports, still insufficient);
- paid leaves for mothers, in case of their babies'falling ill, up to their 3 years of age;
- free medicines for children, up to their 16 years of age;
- free medical assistance in nursery-schools and schools (medical and dental rooms net).

However some difficult situations are still present:

- absence of necessary drugs in preventing and treating acute or chronic diseases (antibiotics, etc);
- the inadequate and old equipments (disposable syringes, HIV testing equipments, rehabilitation equipments, etc);
- still insufficient qualified medical staff, etc.

The effort of the Government for improving the medical net conduced to the carrying out a joint-project of the Ministry of Health and World Bank (RO - 3,409) on the main development directions of the medical system in Romania, consisting of:

- equipping the medical units with the adequate equipment;
- pre-service and in-service training for the medical staff, specialized for children;
- family planning.

Some 550 rural dispensaries (both for grown-ups and for children), 40 maternities and 10 university clinics of obstetrics will be equipped with modern technologies, according to the program.

In the program for the improvement of children's health, of financing and supporting in-service and pre-service training, an important role was played by the UNICEF Office in Romania, supporting the rebuilding of 11 protecting institutions consisting of some 2,000 disabled children.

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In spite of the contradictory evolutions and of some results under the level of expectations, determined especially by the difficulties of the period of transition, there is palpable progress in all the fields: education, health, social protection of the children. Efforts will continue to be done, once with the passing of the economic crisis and of the consequences of totalitarianism, this movement towards normality and progress will by intensified.